

Today is one of the most dreaded days of the year: Tax Day. As millions of Hoosiers file their income taxes today, it is a painful reminder of how much of their hard-earned money goes to Washington. At a time when unemployment in Indiana is 8.8%, working families, small businesses and family farms are making tough choices and practicing the kind of fiscal restraint that will see them through these tough times. They rightly expect that the taxes they pay are spent in a frugal and sensible way.

Yet, for years instead of discipline we have seen recklessness; instead of cutting back we have seen more debt and more deficits piled on future generations, sending the country down a fiscal path that many have called unsustainable. In fact, just today Standard and Poor's downgraded its outlook on the U.S. credit rating to "negative," which raises the likelihood that the United States could lose its "AAA" rating.

Albert Einstein once said that "the hardest thing in the world to understand is the income tax," and it's not hard to see why. The backwards structure of our tax code actually stifles growth and innovation when entrepreneurial investment is precisely what is needed to get this economy moving again. Combined with state and local taxes, the taxpayer burden claims nearly one third of the average American's income. That means most Americans have probably worked the first three months of this year just to pay their taxes.

Most Hoosiers know what the prescription for recovery is: get government under control and get government out of the way. Fiscal discipline in Washington, D.C. and fast-acting tax relief for working families, small businesses, and family farms are what will put our nation on the path towards a growing economy. Tax relief, not more taxes is what will take the pain out of Tax Day.